



**Tara Cheyne MLA**

Minister for the Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy  
Minister for City Services  
Minister for Government Services and Regulatory Reform  
Minister for Human Rights

Member for Ginninderra

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Mr Tom Duncan  
Clerk  
ACT Legislative Assembly  
London Circuit  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

8 August 2024

Dear Mr ~~Duncan~~ *Tom*

Thank you for your letter concerning Petition E-PET 017-24 lodged by Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA regarding the Erskine Street Neighbourhood Playground.

The ACT Government is committed to safe, varied and inclusive play spaces and recognises that play spaces can enhance health and wellbeing, strengthen the social fabric of our communities and contribute to environmental outcomes.

The ACT Government manages over 500 public play spaces located across the ACT, including seven in Macquarie. The Erskine Street neighbourhood playground in Macquarie is classified as a local neighbourhood playground. Local neighbourhood playgrounds generally contain basic structured play equipment to support local residences (as most residences are located within 400 metres of a local playground).

All requests for improvements to Canberra playgrounds are assessed and prioritised annually, guided by direction set by the ACT Play Space Strategy. The assessment process considers factors like demand, hierarchy, proximity to recent playground upgrades, condition, demographics, equity, sustainability and availability of funding.

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Consultation through the development of the ACT Play Space Strategy identified that the ACT community supports a 'quality over quantity' approach to improving the play spaces network. This support for quality reflects how playgrounds are used across Canberra, with many more people visiting district and central playgrounds than local playgrounds. A key focus area identified by the community within the ACT Play Space Strategy includes prioritising district and central playgrounds for refresh and major upgrade because these are much more valued by the community. As such, there are currently no immediate plans to upgrade the Erskine Street neighbourhood playground.

However, I am pleased to advise that the ACT Government is upgrading a central community playground in Macquarie, near the local shops on Lachlan Street. This playground is approximately 500 metres or a 5 minute walk from the Erskine Street neighbourhood playground.

This playground upgrade is intended to cater to the demographics of the area and will provide a wider range of play opportunities for local residents. Construction of this central community playground commenced in the week of 8 July 2024, and upgrades will include slides, an accessible swing, shade sail and nature play elements.

In response to community feedback provided in the petition regarding the basketball court at Macquarie Primary School, the Education Directorate and Macquarie Primary School have inspected the area, which includes a concreted area with two basketball hoops. The Education Directorate has identified minor maintenance opportunities that will improve the condition and functionality of the area, by strengthening the basketball hoop fixtures, as well as the upkeep of grass, weeds and leaf litter, which will be delivered by Macquarie Primary School.

The Education Directorate will also continue engaging with Macquarie Primary School regarding possibilities for future upgrades.

The Education Directorate will continue to consider the infrastructure needs of all ACT public schools, informed by regular engagement with schools, as part of the ACT Government's ongoing work to plan for and invest in public education infrastructure to meet the needs of students, schools and the community.

I appreciate the passion that Macquarie residents have shown for their local playgrounds through their support of this petition and hope they will enjoy the upgraded playground at Macquarie shops a short distance away once complete.

Yours sincerely



Tara Cheyne MLA  
Minister for City Services